
BZA-1832
CITY OF WEST LAFAYETTE REDEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT
Special Exception

STAFF REPORT
August 18, 2011

BZA-1832

CITY OF WEST LAFAYETTE REDEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Special Exception

Staff Report
August 18, 2011

REQUEST MADE, PROPOSED USE, LOCATION:

Petitioner, with consent of property owner, Purdue Research Foundation, is requesting a special exception to permit a fire station (SIC 9224) in the R1 zone. The proposed fire station, operating 24 hours per day, 7 days per week is located on the north side of Kalberer Road across from Cinnabar Street and Amberleigh Village Subdivision, in Wabash 06 (NW) 23-4. (UZO 3-2) Petitioner has also filed a one lot subdivision; the proposed lot lines are shown on the site plan (S-4259).

AREA ZONING PATTERNS:

All property within the corporation limits of West Lafayette lying east of Yeager Road is zoned either R1 or PDRS. The subject property is currently zoned R1; fields surrounding the site to the north, east, and west are also zoned R1. Land to the south across Kalberer Road is zoned R1 and PDRS. Farther west, at the intersection of Yeager and Kalberer, zoning becomes more varied with I3, industrial and OR, office research.

AREA LAND USE PATTERNS:

The subject property is located on some of the remaining undeveloped land within the city limits of West Lafayette.

The south side of Kalberer is dominated by single family homes including Amberleigh Village, a single family residential planned development. North of Kalberer, land remains undeveloped. However, since Purdue Research Foundation owns most of the farm fields from Salisbury west to the city limits staff knows that single family homes are not a potential use: this area instead is part of the planned Purdue Research Park expansion.

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION:

The plans for the fire station show three bays facing the road and two opening to the rear with the ability to add another bay on the east side of the building. If the building is expanded for an additional bay the driveway cut will not change. There is currently a curb cut on the north side of Kalberer; this entrance will need to be improved to meet the demands of the fire trucks. Kalberer is classified as an urban primary with curb and gutter; traffic counts taken in 2008 show 5,871 vehicles passed this site daily.

Required parking for a fire station is one space per employee on the largest shift, one per three volunteers and one space per 200 square feet of net floor area of office space.

The petition indicates that there will be eight employees, any volunteers are included in the shift calculations and the site plan does not show any office space. Based on zoning ordinance requirements, parking for the shown plan are eight spaces; the site plan shows sixteen. This leaves adequate room to have office space or additional firefighters.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND UTILITY CONSIDERATIONS:

This site will be served by sewer and water. Drainage plans will need to be approved by the West Lafayette Engineer's office.

No additional setbacks or buffers are required for this use.

STAFF COMMENTS:

The proposed fire station, at approximately 11,000 square feet, will replace the temporary home of Station #3, currently located at 501 Kalberer. The petition states that this building will provide improved fire and emergency service to surrounding neighborhoods. The hours of operation, 24 hours a day, 7 days per week, are expected of this type of use because emergencies can happen at any time of the day. The proposed lighting is similar in nature to the park department buildings across the street. The only residences in close proximity are in Amberleigh Village which is buffered by trees and landscape burms along Kalberer.

Noise associated with the fire station will be minimal other than when vehicles are leaving the site during an emergency call. This use requires readily access to major thoroughfares for prompt responses to emergencies. The location of the site on Kalberer, a primary arterial, is ideal to quickly move emergency vehicles to their destinations. Since there are no immediate residences to the fire station staff believes the use is a necessity of any community and the site design provides the minimal impact to surrounding uses.

At its meeting on August 3, 2011 the Executive Committee of the Area Plan Commission voted that granting this request would not substantially adversely affect the Comprehensive Plan.

Regarding the ballot items:

1. Section 3.1 of the Unified Zoning Ordinance **DOES** authorize the special exception for a fire station (SIC 9224) in R1 zone.

And it is staff's opinion that:

2. The requirements and development standards for the requested use as prescribed by the Unified Zoning Ordinance **WILL** be met. All development standards can be met based off the submitted site plan. The only question that is not answered on the site plan is signage. The proposed use is permitted 33

square feet of signage if the petitioner desires to increase signage they have the option to file a variance.

3. Granting the special exception **WILL NOT** subvert the general purposes served by the Ordinance. In fact, allowing the fire station to locate at this site enhances the general welfare of the community by allowing fire and emergency vehicles improved access to areas of the city.
4. Granting the special exception **WILL NOT** materially and permanently injure other property or uses in the same district and vicinity because of:
 - a. Traffic generation: With the designation of Kalberer Road as an urban primary it provides the access necessary for emergency vehicles to properly serve the community and not disturb traffic flow.
 - b. Placement of outdoor lighting: The lighting proposed is typical for a government building such as this which includes 15 wall mounted lights and two light poles to illuminate the parking lot.
 - c. Noise production: Emergency vehicles are a necessity to service the community as a whole and sirens are only used in emergencies.
 - d. Hours of operation: 24 hours per day/7 days per week are normal for this use.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approval

Note: A special exception approval ceases to be valid if the use is not established within one year of the date that the special exception was granted.